

ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF THE

Bethlehem Baptist Association,

HELD WITH THE

BELLEVILLE CHURCH,

CONECUH COUNTY, ALABAMA,

ON THE

26TH, 27TH, AND 28TH OF SEPTEMBER, 1863.

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA:

PRINTED AT THE MEMPHIS APPEAL BOOK AND JOB PRINTING OFFICE:

1864.

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BETHLEHEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION.

BELLEVILLE, CONECUH COUNTY, ALA., }
SEPTEMBER 26TH, 1863. }

The Delegates from the Churches composing the Association having convened at the above place, a sermon introductory to the session was preached by Elder L. W. Linsey, of Pine Barren Association, from Col. 3d ch., 1st v., (by request,) Elder F. M. Moss and alternate John McWilliams being absent.

After a short intermission, the Delegates reassembled in the Meeting House. The Association was called to order by the former Moderator, Elder W. C. Morrow.

Prayer by Elder W. C. Morrow.

Proceeded to read the letters.

Elder C. L. Thornton, J. P. Collier and S. Maxwell were appointed to read the letters.

Letters were read, contents noted, and names of Delegates enrolled.

The Association was organized by the election of Elder G. L. Lee, Moderator, and S. Maxwell, Clerk:

Petitionary letters.

The Church at Sparta, through her Delegates, Elder A. Jay and D. K. Smith, petitioned for membership in the Association, and was cordially received.

The Church at Cedar Creek petitioned, through her delegate, J. T. Odum, but being objected to, a committee was appointed, viz: Elder Z. Williams, Elder W. C. Morrow and A. Hendrix, to investigate the standing of the Church.

Appointed Standing Committees:

On Preaching—F. Straughn, T. R. Pope, Pastor and Deacons of the Belleville Church.

On State of Religion, and Digest of Letters—Elder N. Parker, T. Kendall, W. C. Nevil and John Daily.

On Sabbath Schools—Elder Z. Williams, A. Hixon, J. P. Collier and James Nored.

On Correspondence—Elder A. Jay, S. Maxwell, J. H. Burt and F. Straughn,

On Queries and Requests—Elder J. P. Myres, J. M. Travis, Elder W. C. Morrow and Elder C. L. Thornton.

On Finance—R. R. Mosly, E. G. Autry, A. Hendrix and J. M. Robinson.

Committee on Preaching Reported—Elder L. W. Linsey, followed by Elder G. L. Lee in the morning; Elder Z. Williams, and followed by Elder J. P. Myres in the afternoon; Elder J. Cooper in the morning to the blacks, and Elder N. Parker in the afternoon.

Adjourned to Monday morning, nine o'clock. Prayer by Elder A. Jay.

SABBATH, September 27th, 1863.

Prayer Meeting, 10 o'clock. The brethren preached in order of their appointments.

MONDAY MORNING, Nine o'clock, September 28th, 1863.

Met according to adjournment.

Prayer by the Moderator.

Called for other letters. One was received, read, and contents noted.

Called for Corresponding Messengers.

Pine Barren Association—Elder L. W. Linsey, D. Crosby, package of Minutes.

Bethel—Not represented.

Alabama—Not represented.

Report Standing Committees.

Report on State of Religion and Digest of Letters received and adopted. [Appendix A.]

Report on Sabbath Schools received and adopted. [Appendix B.]

Report on Queries and Requests received and adopted. [Appendix C.]

Report on Finance received and adopted. [Appendix D.]

Called for the Committee on the Cedar Creek Church affair. Report received and adopted, as follows:

Your Committee, in case of Cedar Creek Church, after a careful examination, are satisfied that the Church should enforce discipline before the Association should receive it into fellowship, as a constituent member of this body.

Elder Z. WILLIAMS, *Chairman.*

Moved and Resolved, That Brother Perkins, from the Bethel Association, be received as Messenger.

Appointed Correspondents to the following Associations :

Bethel—W. E. Carter.

Pine Barren—Elder G. L. Lee, A. Hendrix, J. H. Daily.

Alabama—N. Parker.

Moved and Resolved, That a Committee be appointed for re-districting the Association, viz: Elder A. Jay, Elder W. C. Morrow, Elder Z. Williams, F. Straughn and W. E. Carter.

Appointed Bro. Hixon, Treasurer.

Resolved, That we set apart Saturday before the fourth Lord's Day in October for humiliation, fasting and prayer; and would recommend that all the Churches would meet on that day, and that this be sent to the South-Western Baptist for publication.

Appointed Elder A. Jay as Messenger to the State Convention; and that his expenses be defrayed by this Body.

Report of Committee on re-districting the Association received and adopted. [See Tabular Statement.]

Resolved. That next Association be held with the Brooklyn Church; and that Elder W. C. Morrow preach the introductory sermon. Alternate, Elder A. Jay.

Resolved, That the Clerk superintend the printing of the Minutes; that five hundred copies be printed; that the Clerk keep an account of the expenses—if over the Minute Fund, to be reimbursed at the next Association.

Ordered Treasurer to pay to the Clerk the Minute Fund. Amount, one hundred dollars and forty-five cents, (\$100.45.) The Clerk receipted for the same.

Elected Brother A. Hixon Treasurer of the Association for twelve months.

Adopted the following resolutions :

Resolved, 1st, That it is the sense of this Association, as regards our national affairs, that our success depends, first, on the confession of our sins, repenting of them and forsaking them, and a firm reliance on God for His guidance and direction; and, second, on an unfaltering support to our earthly rulers, no less in adversity than in prosperity, by furnishing the means at our command, for the general welfare, and by making them, with our Nation's cause, a portion of the theme of our every prayer.

Resolved, 2d, That we are firmly of the opinion that a corroding canker, in the form of speculation and extortion, is now sapping the vitals of our country's cause, and, unless timely arrested, worse apprehensions may be expected from that source than from our National foe.

Resolved, 3d, That it is a lamentable fact, that many inconsiderate brethren are engaged in this unholy trade, from which, for the sake of our Master's cause, for the sake of our country, as also for the sake of humanity, we cannot too strongly urge every brother to desist and repent of this evil practice and forsake it.

Adopted the following rules of business :

First. The Moderator and Clerk hold their offices from the election (of those officers) at one session until the election at the next session,

whose duty it is to occupy their offices at the coming together of the next Association, and proceed regularly to the organization.

Second. The Moderator to call the Association to order; or, if absent, by motion, the vacancy of Moderator or Clerk may be filled, temporarily, by any brother present.

Third. Singing and prayer at the opening of each day's session.

Fourth. Delegates to come forward, with letters or evidences of election, enroll their names; letters read, and statistical matter noted by the Clerk.

Fifth. The Association proceed to organization by electing Moderator and Clerk; and the newly elected to take their seats.

Sixth. Preaching Committee Report.

Seventh. Visiting brethren from other Associations, not delegated, invited to seats, only upon the voice of a majority of the body.

Eighth. Delegates from newly constituted Churches, present evidences or petitionary letters, to be acted on; statistical matter noted; the name of the Church entered upon the calender; the hand of fellowship extended by the Moderator in behalf of the Association; the delegates to enroll their names, being entitled then to all the privileges of any member of the body.

Ninth. Call for correspondence; Clerk to note whatever response, either messenger, minutes, letters, or all.

Tenth. Visiting brethren only share in suggesting and discussing questions; not privileged to vote, second motions, or introduce matter.

Eleventh. Any brother, having it in contemplation to introduce a resolution or resolutions, during the session, will now give notice of such intention, and submit the same to be read by the Clerk.

Twelfth. The appointment of Standing Committees announced at the convenience of the Moderator.

Thirteenth. Committee on Preaching report at pleasure, to meet the exigency.

Fourteenth. Before adjourning announce service for the day following, thus closing business for Saturday.

Fifteenth. The Minutes to be read and approved on the next morning of business, if not at the close of the day's session, unless ordered differently.

Sixteenth. Report in order from Standing or Select Committees; and the Committee can report at any time when no motion is pending.

Seventeenth. The Committee on Finance to receive funds forwarded to the Association, from any source, by calling the name of each Church in their order, note object of contribution, and give due credit.

Eighteenth. Resolutions in order now at any time, at the pleasure of the mover, no other business being under consideration.

Nineteenth. Correspondence arranged, and Messengers appointed or elected.

Twentieth. Report from Finance Committee in order.

Twenty-first. The Association to order the disbursement of the funds entrusted for Ministers, Missions, etc.

Twenty-second. Treasurer's report in order.

Twenty-third. Elect the Church with whom to hold the next Association.

Twenty-fourth. Elect Treasurer.

Twenty-fifth. Elect for the preaching of the next introductory sermon, with alternate.

Twenty-sixth. Fix the salary of the Clerk; arrange for printing and disbursing minutes.

Twenty-seventh. Make pledges; adjourn to meet with the Church elect; singing and prayer; Moderator and Clerk sign the Minutes.

APPENDIX.

(A.)

Report of Committee on State of Religion and Digest of Letters.

Your Committee beg leave to report that, after examination, we find that the Lord has graciously poured out His Spirit upon some of the Churches, and many precious souls have been converted to God, and followed Christ, by baptism, while others seem to be living in peace, without much increase in divine life. We are pleased at an increase of Churches, by the reception of one, (Sparta,) into the Association. We, under our trials, have great reason to be thankful to Almighty God for all His benefits.

NOAH PARKER, *Chairman.*

(B.)

Report on Sabbath Schools.

Your Committee, to whom was referred the all-important subject of Sabbath Schools, beg leave to report, that, upon examining the Church letters, together with the Minutes of last Association, there is found an increase of two organized Schools, making only four in all. While we would rejoice that there are a few Pastors and Churches engaged in this great work, and accord to them every respect, love and gratitude, and hope they may, under God, be as leaven to the rest; yet, is it possible, that there are but four Sabbath Schools on record in this vast Association? Why this want of interest in Sabbath Schools? an institution in importance second only to the Church of Christ, the great nursery of Christians, where grows susceptible material for the increasing influence of Churches and Pastors; an institution in which perfect obedience can be rendered to all the commands respecting the raising of children in the fear and admonition of the Lord. Is it for the want of knowledge and convicting grace to establish this fact? Is it because the members won't lay hold and help them? Is it possible that they, with hardened indifference to the eternal cry from this quarter of God's moral vineyard, are overlooking these great and important truths? In the name of all Heaven means, for Christ sake, we call upon all the Churches to awake, arise, and go to this work with all their might and strength. Were it not for the blockade, we would recommend the organization of a permanent Sabbath School Society, to be represented in this body by all the Schools of the different Churches.

Respectfully submitted.

Elder Z. WILLIAMS, *Chairman.*

(C.)

Report of Committee on Queries and Requests.

Your committee beg leave to report that from the information received from the Church letters, there are no queries, and the only request is from Brooklyn church, to hold your next Association with them, which request we refer to the Association.

J. P. MYRES, *Chairman.*

(D.)

Report of the Committee on Finance.

CHURCHES.		SOLDIERS' MISSION.		CHURCHES.		SOLDIERS' MISSION.	
	MINUTES.					MINUTES.	
Claiborne Church.....	\$ 3 20	Georgiana Church.....	2 00	Bethel Church	5 00		
Salem Church.....	6 00	Sardis Church.....	2 00	Elim Church.....	1 50		
Zion Church.....	6 00	Old Town Church.....	5 00	Sparta Church.....	2 50	17 20	
Monroeville Church.....	10 00	Mount Carmel Church.....	2 50	New Hope Church.....	3 00	62 00	
Philadelphia Church.....	3 00						
Bethany Church.....	7 60						
Pleasant Hill Church.....	4 00						
Belleville Church.....	10 15	67 30					
Arkadelphia Church.....	4 00						
Beulah Church.....	4 00						\$100 45
Evergreen Church.....	4 00	20 00		Public Collection, on Sab-			
Brooklyn Church.....	6 00			bath for Soldiers' Mission.			180 55
Olive Branch Church.....	6 00						
New Prospect Church.....	3 00						\$387 55

Respectfully submitted,

R. R. MOSLEY, *Chairman.*

(E.)

Treasurer's Report.

	Dr.	Cr.
To Cash of Finance Committee.....		\$487 95
By Cash paid Clerk.....	\$100 40	
By Cash paid Elder A. Jay, Messenger to the State Convention, 387 55—		\$487 95

Respectfully, submitted, A. HIXON, *Treasurer.*

CONSTITUTION OF THE BETHLEHEM BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE 1. The Association shall be composed of Members chosen by the different Churches in our Union, who, in producing credentials, shall be entitled to seats.

ART. 2. The Members thus chosen and convened, shall be known by the name of the "Bethlehem Baptist Association," who shall usurp no authority over the Churches in our Union, or infringe on any of their internal rights; but shall be merely an advisory counsel, in all matters relative to their internal concerns: nevertheless, it becomes necessary, in some cases, to have a uniform rule of procedure, namely: If one Church commit an offense against another, it shall be the duty of the *offended* to labor with the *offender* for satisfaction; if she fail of success, she shall call the aid of two or more sister Churches in our Union to assist in laboring for satisfaction, and, if final satisfaction, in the opinion of the helps thus called, be not attained, the aggrieved may bring her case before the Association for counsel. If a serious difference should arise in an individual Church, which, upon labor, cannot be reconciled, she shall call the aid of two or more sister Churches to assist in the work; and, if a happy reconciliation, in the opinion of the helps thus called, be not effected, the case may be brought before the Association, and acted upon as above prescribed; but the Association will take cognizance of no case of the above kind, unless a due course of procedure shall have been pursued, according to the economy of Church Discipline, found in the 18th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew, and other parts of Scripture, which define the nature of offences, and manner of bringing offenders to trial.

ART. 3. The Churches in our Union shall transmit to every Annual Session of the Association, a letter, specifying the names of their Messengers, their number in fellowship, baptised, received by letter, dismissed, excommunicated, restored, deceased since last session, which shall be read and minuted accordingly.

ART. 4. Every Church in our Union shall be entitled to representation, in the following manner, viz: A Church containing fifty members, or less, shall send two Messengers; and, for every additional fifty, an additional Messenger. Any

Church failing to represent herself as above prescribed, shall state the reason at the next Session.

ART. 5. New Churches may be admitted into our Union by Messengers bearing petitionary letters. If, upon due examination, they be found orderly and orthodox, the Moderator shall manifest their admission by giving the Messengers the right hand of fellowship.

ART. 6. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by a regular and proper decorum, which she is authorized to form and amend according to her own views.

ART. 7. At every session of the Association, a Moderator shall be appointed by, and of the number present, whose duty it shall be to see that the rules of decorum are strictly observed, and to take the voice of the Association on all subjects legally introduced. A Clerk shall also be appointed, whose duty it shall be to take proper and correct minutes of the proceedings.

ART. 8. The Association shall have power to exclude from her Union, any Church that may violate the Constitution, or depart from the orthodox principles of the Gospel.

ART. 9. The Association shall furnish the Churches with the Minutes of every Session.

ART. 10. Every query sent by a Church, must be enclosed in her letter, certifying that she has endeavored to reconcile it, but failed: in such case, the Association shall take it under consideration, and the voice of the Association shall be considered an advisory answer, which shall be entered on the Minutes, unless withdrawn by her Messengers, or voted out of the Association.

ART. 11. Any Church in our Union, having a member who is judged to possess promising talents for the Ministry, shall call from two or more Churches the aid of their Ministers, and select members of the Laity, who, in conjunction with the Church, shall examine the candidate, and if deemed qualified, may license him to preach the Gospel among the Churches, at discretion, which shall be reported to the Association, and entered on the Minutes.

ART. 12. Any Church in our Union having a preacher whom she deems worthy of ordination, shall call a Presbytery of Ministers from sister Churches, to officiate in the work; and all Presbyters, in the ordaining of Ministers or Deacons, or in the constituting of Churches, shall be governed by the abstract of faith adopted by this Association.

ART. 13. Any Church in our Union having a Minister who may have fallen into disorder, if, after all due labor with him, he should continue refractory, and the Church consider him a fit subject for excommunication, shall have power to exclude him from fellowship, and demand his credentials. If such a Minister return and give satisfaction, the Church has the power to restore him to fellowship; and also to restore to him his credentials, if in her opinion they should be restored, and report the same to the next Association, to be entered on the Minutes.

ART. 14. The Association shall have a fund supplied by the voluntary contributions of the Churches, and all moneys thus contributed shall be transmitted from the Churches by their Messengers, and paid over to the Committee on Finance. This Committee shall be appointed annually, whose duty it shall be to receive in charge the Association fund, and dispose of the same agreeably to order, and make, at every session, a fair and circumstantial report of their proceedings.

ART. 15. The Association shall not adjourn any session, until she shall have finished the business on hand, except in extraordinary cases.

ART. 16. The minutes of the Association shall be read, and corrected if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk, before the session rises.

ART. 17. The Association shall, in all cases, be governed by a majority of the members present.

ART. 18. Amendments to this constitution may be made at any session of the Association, when a majority of the members shall deem it necessary.

ARTICLES OF FAITH.

ARTICLE 1. We believe in only one true and living God: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

ART. 2. We believe the Old and New Testament to be the revealed mind and will of God, and the only rule of faith and practice.

ART. 3. We believe in the doctrine of Election, that God chose his people in Christ before the world began.

ART. 4 We believe in the doctrine of original sin.

ART. 5. We believe in man's incapacity, by his own free will and ability, to recover himself from the fallen state in which he is by nature.

ART. 6. We believe that sinners are justified in the sight of God, by the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

ART. 7. We believe that God's elect shall be called, justified and glorified.

ART. 8. We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper, are Gospel ordinances: that immersion is the only mode of baptism; that believers are the only subjects.

ART. 9. We believe that regularly baptised members, in good standing, have a right to the Lord's table.

ART. 10. We believe in the resurrection of the dead and a general judgment; and that the joys of the righteous, and punishment of the wicked shall be everlasting.

RULES OF ORDER.

ARTICLE 1. The Association shall be opened and closed by prayer.

ART. 2. A Moderator and Clerk shall be chosen by the suffrage of the members present.

ART. 3. The Moderator shall be considered a judge of order, and shall have a discretionary right to call to order at any time.

ART. 4. A member not satisfied with his decision, may appeal to the Association on the same day, but at no other time.

ART. 5. But one member shall speak at a time, who shall rise to his feet, and, on obtaining permission, proceed.

ART. 6. The Moderator, when addressed by a member for permission to speak, shall signify the same by naming the person, or otherwise.

ART. 7. No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he departs from the subject, or use words of personal reflection. Every motion made and seconded shall come under the consideration of the Association, unless withdrawn by him that made it.

ART. 8. Every case taken up by the Association shall be decided on or withdrawn, before another shall be offered.

ART. 9. When a question is taken up, after allowing time for the debates, the Moderator shall take the voice of the Association on the subject; and the members on the affirmative of the question, shall signify the same by rising from their seats; and those on the negative shall retain theirs.

ART. 10. The Moderator shall pronounce the decision before the standers resume their seats.

ART. 11. Any member wishing to retire, shall obtain permission of the Moderator.

ART. 12. No member shall speak more than twice on the same proposition without permission of the Association, nor more than once, till every member wishing to speak shall have spoken; nor shall any proposition be made to close the subject, until the debates have been carried through.

ART. 13. The appellation of brother shall be used in the Association by members, in their addresses, one to another.

ART. 14. The names of the members shall be called as often as the Association may direct.

ART. 15. No member shall be tolerated in any practice which tends to interrupt public speaking.

ART. 16. The Moderator shall be entitled to the same privilege of speaking as any other member, provided he appoint another to his seat during the time; but shall not vote on any question, unless the Association be equally divided.

ART. 17. Any person violating these rules shall be reproved by the Moderator at discretion, but only on the day the breach shall have been made.

MEMPHIS APPEAL JOB PRINTING OFFICE, }
 Montgomery, Ala., March 19th, 1864. }

RECEIVED, of S. MAXWELL, one hundred and ninety-two dollars, for printing five hundred copies of "Minutes of Bethlehem Baptist Association."

E. F. GOODE.

TABULAR STATEMENT.

CHURCHES.	POST OFFICE.	PASTOR.	CLERK.	DELEGATES.	Restored.	Excluded.	Adm.	Dead.	Whites.	Blacks.	Total.	Sabbath Meeting.
Stocton	Stocton			Not represented							80	
Montgomery Hill	Tensaw			Not represented							108	
Little River	Mt. Pleasant			Not represented								
Clabourne	Clabourne	A. J. Lambert	R. J. Draughon	Wm. Emmons	6			5			135	4
Salom	Clabourne	G. L. Lee	J. T. Fountain	A. Hixon, W. Newberry	2			6	135	30	165	4
Zion	Monroeville	J. McWilliams	V. D. McWilliams	T. B. Pope	1			4	103	21	124	1
Monroeville	Monroeville	G. I. Lee	J. T. Henderson	John Dally	2			2	101	61	162	2
Philadelphia	Burnt Corn	J. McWilliams	J. H. Dally	N. W. Miller, J. H. Dally	2			8	77	66	133	4
Pleasant Hill	Clabourne	J. McWilliams	A. Stacy	W. B. Carrier	3			3	43	11	54	3
Bethany	Burnt Corn	C. L. Thornton	R. R. Mosley	Eld. G. L. Lee, B. Bradberry, R. E. Mosley, N. Thornton, W. C. Nevil, F. Straughn, J. H. Burt, H. Gully, H. M. Andrews	2			2	83	129	212	3
Belleville	Belleville	A. Jay	D. Robins	Not represented	2			3	80	87	173	4
Hopewell	Belleville			Not represented								
Murder Creek	Sparta			Not represented								
Arkadelphia	Belleville	G. L. Lee	Jas. Norred	I. Norred, Isaac Hines	2			2	75	20	95	3
Catawba Spring	Brewton's			Not represented								
Beulah	Sparta	W. C. Morrow	E. G. Antry	Eld. W. C. Morrow, J. M. Frawley, T. Khadali, E. G. Antry	4	3	12	2	43	295	336	1
Shilo	Ft. Crawford			Not represented								
Pilgrim's Rest	Brewton's			Not represented								
Pensacola	Evergreen			Not represented								
Olive Branch	Evergreen			Not represented								
Sparta	Sparta	F. M. Moss	A. Hendrix	A. Hendrix							204	
Evergreen	Evergreen	A. Jay	J. A. Williamson	J. N. Yates	2			6	76	14	90	1
New Hope	Evergreen	W. C. Morrow	J. F. Beumont	Eld. A. Jay, D. K. Smith					15	5	15	3
Union	Sepulga	J. P. Myres	Y. M. Rebb	Y. M. Rebb, R. P. Stallworth	2			1	53	56	106	3
Brushy Creek	Sepulga	A. W. Jones	J. R. Cook	S. Maxwell								
Oaky Sreak	East Georgia	F. M. Moss		Not represented								
Milton	Milton			Not represented								
Macdonia	Starlington			Not represented								
New Prospect	Starlington	G. L. Lee	C. W. Summerall	Not represented								
Georgiana	Georgiana	P. S. Milner	N. Robson	Not represented								
Brooklyn	Brooklyn	C. L. Thornton	J. M. Robinson	Eld. C. L. Thornton, Eld. Y. Wil-	20	4	8	2	92	18	110	1
Bethel	South Butler	F. M. Moss	N. Parker	ians, J. P. Collier, J. M. Robinson	8	3	2		49	8	57	4
Sepulga	Brewton			Not represented								
Elam	Georgiana	None	M. J. Herrington	Not represented								
Sards	Georgiana	J. P. Myres	Gilis Driver	Gilis Driver					2	23	18	
Pleasant Hill, Fla	Evergreen	A. Jay	A. Thomas	Not represented								
Old Town	Evergreen			A. Thomas								
Pine Barren				Not represented								
Shady Grove				Not represented								
Little Escambia				Not represented								
Coon Hill				Not represented								
Mt. Carmel	Garland	J. P. Myres	Thos. Anthony	Eld. J. P. Myres	3	1		1	22	3	25	4

First District.

Second District.

Third District.

